

MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

RESEARCH ACTIVITY PANEL

Meeting Minutes  
Friday, February 9, 1996  
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
California Department of Fish and Game  
Conference Room

I. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

Members in attendance:

Greg Cailliet, Moss Landing Marine Labs- Chair  
Rick Starr, U.C. Sea Grant- Vice Chair  
Andrew DeVogelaere, MBNMS- Research Coordinator

George Boehlert, NOAA/NMFS/PFEG  
Jane Caffrey, ESNERR and Foundation  
Steve Eittreim, USGS  
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium  
Jim Harvey, Moss Landing Marine Labs  
Deborah Johnston, CA DFG/ Monterey  
Ken Parker  
Don Potts, UCSC  
Jan Roletto, GFNMS/CBNMS  
Leslie Rosenfeld, Naval Postgraduate School  
Gary Sharp, CIRIOS  
Gary Ichikawa (for Mark Stephenson) CDFG/Mar. Pollution Studies Lab  
Les Strnad (for Tami Grove), CA Coastal Commission  
Geoff Wheat, NOAA/NURP

Members not in attendance:

Patricia Port, Department of the Interior  
Dennis Powers, Hopkins Marine Station  
Bruce Robison, MBARI  
Jim Rote, CSUMB  
Karen Worcester, Morro Bay Foundation

Guests in attendance:

Patrick Cotter, MBNMS and CA Coastal Commission  
Steve Guiney, CA Coastal Commission  
Michelle Knight, UCSC  
Aileen Loe, CALTRANS  
Caroline Pomeroy, UCSC/CSUMB  
Thomas Neal, PSRF  
Norman Scott Jr., NBS  
Sean Van Sommeran, PSRF

## II. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair. Greg Cailliet welcomed the newest member of the RAP, Jane Caffrey, from Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.

## III. CONSENT ITEMS

### A. Approval of December 8, 1995 minutes (Cailliet)

The minutes were approved as amended.

## IV. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

### A. CALTRANS/Piedras Blancas/Elephant Seals

Norman Scott, of the National Biological Survey, gave a presentation on the history of the elephant seal population near Pt. Piedras Blancas. The population has increased from 150 individuals in the Fall of 1990 to 3,850 in the Spring of 1995. The elephant seals are spreading from Pt. Piedras Blancas south as the population grows, and there is now conflict in beach use by these large marine mammals with campers, divers, fishermen, boating activity and site seers.

Aileen Low, of CALTRANS, gave a presentation on the planning process for a 1.3 mile highway realignment project at near Pt. Piedras Blancas. There has been a higher than expected accident rate on this curvy section of road. Issues of concern for the project are sensitive habitats, public access to the ocean, vista points, parking areas, and land acquisition or trades.

Les Strnad summarized the issues of concern relevant to developing a management plan for the area, and asked for RAP representation for the science portion of the planning process leading to a comprehensive plan. The elephant seal issue is a growing problem throughout central California, and this project may be an opportunity to develop a process for similar issues in the future.

Action taken by the RAP: a list of experts on elephant seal research was provided to Les Strnad. Jim Harvey was named the RAP representative to attend as many planning meetings as possible and to report back to the RAP (Jan Roletto and Andrew DeVogelaere were named as alternate representatives). The RAP felt that this project was ripe for involvement by the new Monterey Regional Studies Group at UCSC, and that the MBNMS conservation and education working groups.

### B. Kelp Harvesting in Monterey (Cailliet)

This issue was referred to the RAP by the Sanctuary Advisory Council. Ed Cooper, Advisory Council Diving Representative, was concerned about commercial kelp harvesting impacts on resources and diving. Greg Cailliet reviewed the current harvesting practices and California Department of Fish and Game regulations. The RAP felt that kelp harvesting was an adequately regulated activity with minimal impact on natural resources.

### C. Cruise Ship Visits (Cailliet)

This issue was also referred to the RAP by the Sanctuary Advisory Council. Council members wanted scientific advice on potential impacts of cruise ship visits to Monterey Bay. The RAP pointed out that potential resource impacts from ships included introduction of exotic species, damage to the sea floor from anchors, and ship board marine debris and potential oil spills.

BREAK

### D. GFNMS/Northern MBNMS Research Program Overview (Roletto) with MBNMS North Research Coordinator Report (Roletto)

Research projects in the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) and the northern MBNMS include: a developing rocky shore monitoring program (on contract); a beach survey program to count birds and mammals (dead and alive), tar balls, and human use activities (a volunteer program); cooperation with CDFG on harbor seal surveys; work with the Estero Marine Reserve (Jan sits on the advisory committee), cooperation with OSPR on oil spill contingency planning, and a common Murre restoration project (Ed Ueber is on the Trustee Council).

The program does not have a formal plan or Research Activity Panel, but works informally with many scientists and resource agencies. The goal is to work cooperatively on projects to develop monitoring programs and assess resource management issues.

The question of MBNMS RAP jurisdiction was discussed relative to the temporary agreement that the northern MBNMS (north of the Santa Cruz/San Mateo County line) is managed by the GFNMS office. Jan Roletto welcomed the RAP view that its jurisdiction included the whole MBNMS. As several past research projects have been initiated without RAP input (NOTE: MBNMS staff was informed), everyone agreed to improve communication and involvement of the RAP in the northern MBNMS.

### V. SHORT INFORMATION ITEMS

#### A. MBNMS Research Coordinator Report (DeVogelaere)

- Institutional permits: MBNMS has received a draft of the new permit process. A subgroup of the RAP will be meeting on Feb. 14 at CDFG to go over a draft that will be presented at the Managers meeting scheduled for March in Washington, D.C.
- Site Characterization: Progress continues on the MBNMS Site Characterization.
- Numerous maps have been generated, and draft chapters are being circulated to select experts. The next step is to send a second draft to a broad audience of reviewers.
- Electronic communication: The MBNMS Homepage is undergoing a face-lift, and there is now a searchable research directory of central coast scientists available. An offer from Aaron King to demonstrate the homepage at the next RAP meeting was appreciated but declined. Any additions or deletions to RAP, RAP interest list, McArthur list, or Research Directory should be directed to Aaron King.

- Intertidal Monitoring: MBNMS staff has been coordinating with UCSC, Sea Grant, Stanislaus State University, Moss Landing Marine Labs, Applied Marine Sciences, and the Minerals Management Service to develop a comprehensive rocky intertidal shore monitoring program. In addition, efforts will be made to coordinate these projects with the intertidal monitoring program in the northern MBNMS.
- RAP Intern: CSUMB has provided the MBNMS with a service learning student, Stacey Urner. She will be updating the RAP Binder and working on special projects.
- Pilot study on overflight harassment: SRD is working on a MOU with OSPR for permitting overflights for research purposes. The project that initiated the discussion is seasonal overflights to assess the sea otter population. MBNMS staff is looking forward to directed research on impacts of overflights to help them make management decisions.

B. AAAS Conference at SJSU (Sharp)

The AAAS Call For Papers has been published. The deadline for abstract submission is April 10, 1996 and the meeting will be held June 23-27, 1996. There is still plenty of opportunity for presentations in the science and sanctuaries sessions.

C. Report on the January 1996 SAC Meeting (Cailliet)

Refer to the Sanctuary Advisory Council minutes.

D. Jurisdiction of the RAP (Cailliet)

Addressed in the GFNMS report above.

E. Shark Chumming Regulation (Cailliet)

The proposed rule on shark chumming in the Sanctuaries will come out next week. The public hearing will be announced in the Federal Register. The Pelagic Shark Research Foundation is documenting the process in the news section of their homepage. Maria Brown at the GFNMS is the local Sanctuary contact organizing the public meetings.

F. NURP Deep Sea Research Workshop (Wheat)

NURP is planning a workshop to develop a special Monterey Bay Initiative. The concept is to have dedicated funds for this region as a uniquely qualified are with people and institutional support to address topical issues. A workshop at MBARI, coordinated by NURP and MBNMS, will be held on May 16-17, 1996 to discuss appropriate research priorities and needs for the Monterey Bay Initiative.

G. McArthur Cruise (DeVogelaere)

The MBNMS has been allocated 17 Days-at-Sea from May 28 to June 13, 1996. Proposals are due on March 4, 1996. MBNMS staff is still looking into finding cooperative agencies to supply ROVs for the cruise.

Members of the RAP were selected to help MBNMS staff with the McArthur cruise proposals: Jane Caffrey, Andrew DeVogelaere, Gary Sharp and Geoff Wheat.

The RAP felt it was appropriate to use funds from the MBNMS research budget to augment McArthur Cruise projects. They left it up to the MBNMS staff to decide on an appropriate amount and notify scientists on the McArthur list as money becomes available. Moreover, the RAP suggested that a clarification be made, by e-mail, on the proposal format, specifying that outside support that would help ensure completion of the proposed project be described.

#### H. Sanctuary Currents Symposium (Starr)

The Sanctuary Currents Symposium planning process is progressing well. Please refer to the circulated flyers for a review of the program. 50 abstracts have been submitted for poster presentations.

#### I. International Marine Biodiversity Initiative (Potts)

Don Potts is submitting a brief history of biodiversity issues and an introduction to the Monterey Bay IMBI to the journal "Oceanography." A core working group now exists to develop plan for an inclusive, multi-institutional, international center for biodiversity on the UCSC property at Ft. Ord.

#### J. California Biodiversity Council (Cailliet)

Refer to the Sanctuary Advisory Council minutes.

#### K. Mussel Watch (Cailliet)

Bruce McPherson has drafted legislation to support the Mussel Watch Program state-wide. This is the result of Mark Stephenson's proposal to the RAP and generous support from the Sanctuary Advisory Council. Firm budget figures should be added to the legislation. The RAP has finished it's role in this effort to save the Mussel Watch Program.

#### L. Fort Ord Update (Eittreim)

Heroic efforts continue to retrieve research funds, through appropriate routes, from the Army. MBARI will use the Ventana ROV to assist in the identification of human-made objects located in the Exclusion Zone. Apparently bacterial caused epidermal lesions have been found in English and Dover Sole, but the frequency of the lesions is no different that in the rest of Monterey Bay. Stay tuned for more results.

#### M. Permit Report

There were no comments.

#### VI. OLD BUSINESS

Patrick Cotter gave an update on the Cambria Desalination Plant permit: the permitting agencies have required a draft monitoring plan which addresses all of the concerns voiced by the RAP. Work by the RAP subcommittee was greatly appreciated and said to be invaluable by California Coastal Commission and MBNMS staff.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

George Boehlert circulated a West Coast Beachcomber Alert. The NOAA Ocean Surface Current Simulation models of OSCURS predicts the imminent arrival of hockey gloves and other floatable debris from 49 containers lost in the mid-Pacific Ocean.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew DeVogelaere  
MBNMS Research Coordinator

Jane M. DeLay  
MBNMS Advisory Council Coordinator